

June 5 2020

# Noticias y Notas

News and notes from the Second Judicial District Court

## A word from the chief

### Finding the silver lining in the COVID-19 Cloud

March 11, 2020, is a day that I—and I am sure many of you—will never forget. At 6:20 p.m. that day, I was sitting in the Sprint Center in Kansas City, Missouri watching the first round game between Iowa State University and Texas Christian University of the Big 12 NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament. This tournament is a big deal for me. I have attended it for the last 10 years without fail. This year I was particularly excited because my team, the University of Kansas Jayhawks, were the undisputed number one team in the country and expected to win not just the Big 12 tournament, but also the Big Dance, the NCAA Championship tournament in April.

Our seats were absolutely the best seats we had ever had the for this tournament—fourteen rows up from center court. Things could not have lined up better for me, a rabid college basketball fanatic, until . . . Well you know what happened next. It seemed like the entire country shut down in a matter of hours.

Needless to say, life has been very different—and somewhat difficult—for most of us ever since. It's as if we've lost something very near and dear and now we are cycling through those well-known stages of grief (i.e. denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance) while trying to adjust to a new normal.

#### Learning experiences

I have learned in now almost sixty-three years of life that in the periods of my life when things are going smoothly, I have experienced the least growth as a person. However, I have grown the most dramatically during times that have been, hands down, the most difficult.

These last 3 months have been difficult times for all of us. Now after months of social distancing (a term I had never heard before March 11th), maintaining a strict six-foot distance between people, excessive and maybe obsessive use of Purell hand sanitizer and sheltering in place, we are starting to see the sun begin to peak out from behind a dark cloud with the lifting of some restrictions.

As we continue to see the COVID-19 numbers improve, lives saved and restored, and things beginning to look more "normal", I am trying not to dwell on difficulties the pandemic created. Instead I am trying determine what lesson I can take from this time that will make me a better human being. I urge you to do the same.

One thing I have learned is not to take people for granted. I am more thankful today for all of the people in my life, including all of you. I have a heightened appreciation for the good that people can do, such as making face masks to protect one another and donating to Roadrunner Food Bank. These things have helped me to see more beauty than darkness in this pandemic. I hope they can do the same for you.

**Chief Judge Stan Whitaker**

### Telework training can boost your mood

You should recall that we have a wealth of classes, reading material and other resources at our fingertips on the Telework Training webpage. The recent additions include webinars from The Solutions Group, EAP, designed specifically to help people cope with different aspects of the pandemic. Browse through these and other programs on the [Telework Training page](#).

Again, we thank Monica Lucero for finding these resources.



### Shout outs



**This is the space where we sound the horn for outstanding performances.**

This week's shout out goes to the **Mortgage Foreclosure Settlement Program**, which continued to have telephonic status conferences between distressed homeowners and mortgage companies during the pandemic. This is critical because those conferences are where 99% of the foreclosure cases get resolved. We salute the FSP staff, **Program Administrator Christopher Peck, and attorneys Susan Widner and John Higgins.**

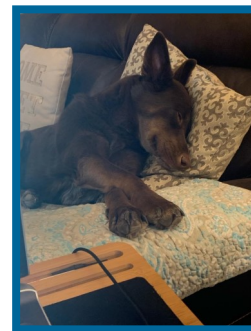
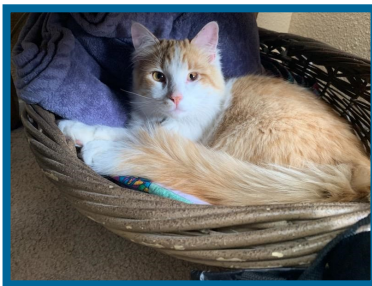
**Have news to share?**

Send it to:

[albdxsh@nmcourt.gov](mailto:albdxsh@nmcourt.gov)



## Post cards from the teleworking front



One consequence of working from home is having our workspaces quickly go to the dogs, or in some cases the cats. Corina Plata, Judicial Specialist Lead Worker in the Children's Court Clerk's Office, knows what that means. Corina's current office mates, from left to right, are Issy, Mister Olive and Hazel, who appears to be on a break.

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## There is still time to enter the SJDC mask-design contest

The deadline for the Second Judicial District Court face-mask design contest is next Friday, June 12, 2020. If you are in the courthouse, you can bring a sample of your design to the Human Resources Department. Teleworkers can take photos of their work showing both front and side views and email them to both [Elizabeth Garcia](#), the court's General Counsel and [Saundra Sanchez](#), HR Director. We will show the winning designs in the next newsletter.

### *Identify the graduate*

A number of people correctly identified the graduate in last week's photo as Judge Cincy Leos. However, the first correct answer came, within two minutes of the newsletter's release, from Jeff Gulley, TCAA to Judge Daniel Gallegos. Congratulations, Jeff. Contact [Janet Van Why](#) in HR to claim your prize.



This week's graduate photo is [posted here](#). Again, the first person to correctly identify the graduate wins. Send answers to [albdxh@nmcourts.gov](mailto:albdxh@nmcourts.gov)